

Editorial

The term “community-based inclusive development (CBID)” seems to be increasingly used in place of “community-based rehabilitation (CBR)”. After three Asia-Pacific CBR Congresses, the fourth one to be held in July this year is called the Asia-Pacific CBID Congress. The Declaration from the 3rd Asia Pacific CBR Congress in Japan in September 2015 talks about “Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR)/Community-based Inclusive Development (CBID, also known as CBR).....”. Some international donors are using the term “CBID” to describe their approach that encompasses health, education, livelihoods, social and empowerment, which are the components of the CBR Matrix. Others seem to be taking the position that CBR will focus on physical rehabilitation while CBID will address the social and environmental aspects.

This raises some questions – is CBID just a new term for CBR? Can the two terms be considered synonymous? Should CBID be viewed as a much broader concept that should include all marginalised groups in a community and not just persons with disabilities? Does CBID mean that from the twin track approach that was being advocated earlier, we have moved to a single track – that of mainstreaming?

The WHO CBR Guidelines of 2010 is titled “CBR Guidelines: Towards Community-based Inclusive Development”, implying that CBR is a strategy to achieve inclusive development. The Preface to the Introductory booklet states that “The guidelines promote CBR as a strategy which can contribute to implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and of disability inclusive national legislation, and which can support community-based inclusive development.”

In 2011, I have argued that “Community-based inclusive development is an aim or goal or an end result to be achieved—of making communities and society at large inclusive of all marginalised groups and their concerns, including persons with disability. The rationale is that no one should be excluded from development for any reason, be it gender, disability, ethnicity, refugee status, sexuality or any other issue. CBR is the tool or strategy to achieve the goal of community-based inclusive development for persons with disability, just as other interest groups in the community (gender, etc.), use their own strategies to make development inclusive of their constituents.

“CBR uses the principles of participatory community development—social justice, self-determination, participation and reflection—in an attempt to make development inclusive of all persons with disability. CBR uses a ‘twin-track’

approach to achieve the goal of community-based inclusive development: 1) Working with persons with disability to build their capacity, address their special needs, ensure equal opportunities and rights, and facilitate them to become self-advocates for their inclusion in all development processes. 2) Working with the community and society at large to remove barriers that exclude persons with disability, and ensuring that persons with disability have access to all development benefits in the same way as others in their community.

“In communities where there are different stakeholders working with different marginalised groups for the same goal of community-based inclusive development, CBR needs to build partnerships with those groups in order to maximise resources and opportunities, and to develop a bigger collective voice in advocating for inclusion. In communities where needs of other marginalised groups are unaddressed, CBR will need to consider how to include such groups in some of the activities like livelihoods, for example” (Reflections on Community-based Rehabilitation, Psychology and Developing Societies, 23, 2 (2011): 277–291).

It is almost a decade since the publication of the CBR Guidelines, and there is an urgent need for greater debate on the need and rationale for the use of different terminology for essentially the same activities that were being implemented in different countries, to avoid confusion and misinterpretation.

Maya Thomas

Editor-in-Chief

Disability, CBR and Inclusive Development